



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

February 11, 2005

News Release

11th GUILTY PLEA IN MASSIVE ASYLUM, DOCUMENT FRAUD CASE

*Investigation uncovered widespread abuse in obtaining
drivers licenses, Social Security cards, labor certificates*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- An 11th person pleaded guilty Wednesday in federal court to a massive immigration benefits scheme by organizations whose members coached aliens on how to, among other things, solicit sympathy from asylum officers.

The guilty plea in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia came the day after the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom issued a report criticizing the Department of Homeland Security for detaining asylum seekers, despite the fact that 72 percent of all asylum claims are not legitimate and use of fraudulent documents by aliens is a rampant problem.

"We're seeing more and more of these type cases every day," said Director Marcy Forman, who leads ICE's nationwide investigative efforts. "Every time someone attempts to obtain benefits by deception, it degrades the entire immigration system because fraudulent documents present risks -- the risk that criminals will use those documents to further criminal schemes and the risk to our national security."

Springfield, Va. resident Johnson Aliffin, 33, pleaded guilty to conspiracy and immigration fraud and agreed to forfeit \$10,000. Aliffin assisted in the preparation of about 100 fraudulent asylum claims. He is scheduled to be sentenced May 6.

Aliffin's plea was the result of "Operation Jakarta," a two-year, ICE-led Eastern District Fraud Task Force investigation into the illegal practices of Indonesian immigration brokers and consultants operating in Northern Virginia and Maryland.

Four principal brokerages were investigated: the Chinese Indonesian American Society, operated by Hans Gouw and located in Fairfax Station, Va.; Asian American Placement Services, operated by Megawaty Gandasaputra and Michael Wright, located in Springfield, Va.; Kumala Nusantara,

operated by Nany Kumala and located in Burke, Va.; and Chinese Indonesian Pribumi Community Service, operated by Silvy Karageorge and located in Manassas, Va.

Investigators found, as stated in an affidavit by the government filed in support of a multi-count criminal indictment details, that the owners, employees and associates of these brokerages knowingly defrauded the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia from at least late-1999 through the present.

In particular, the investigation revealed that the defendants aided thousands of Indonesian aliens living throughout the United States to apply by fraud for a wide variety of government benefits through alien labor certification, Virginia driver's licenses and identification cards, United States passports, and Social Security cards.

The government's affidavit alleges that the principal frauds pursued by the defendants were asylum fraud, labor certification fraud and identification document fraud. With regard to asylum, the government's investigation revealed that several of the defendants were routinely preparing fraudulent asylum applications for Indonesian clients in return for a fee of \$2,000 or more. These applications typically contained false claims that the applicant had been raped, sexually assaulted, beaten or robbed by Muslims in Indonesia on account of the applicant's Chinese ethnicity or adherence to Christianity. Many of these claims were stock accounts repeated with little variation from application to application. The defendants often supported these claims with counterfeit Indonesian documents, such as birth certificates, baptismal certificates and police reports.

The investigation also revealed that the defendants named in the indictment (listed below), including Aliffin, coached their clients to exploit the perceived sympathies of the asylum officers and immigration judges assigned to consider the applications. For example, the defendants counseled married aliens to feature the wife as the lead applicant because the defendants believed asylum officers and immigration judges were more sympathetic to women and less likely to question them aggressively. Applicants were told to cry, plead and avoid positive references to Indonesia. The defendants also supplied their alien clients with Indonesian interpreters who would enhance and correct the testimony clients gave asylum officers during asylum interviews.

With regard to identification document fraud, the government alleged that several of the defendants routinely aided Indonesian clients to obtain Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) driver's licenses, learner's permits and identification cards by fraud. In particular, the investigators found that the defendants prepared fraudulent DMV residency certifications (DMV form DL51) for nearly 1,900 Indonesian aliens. The aliens used these residency certifications to prove to the DMV that they lived at specific addresses in Northern Virginia despite that fact that the applicants lived elsewhere.

With regard to labor certification fraud, the government alleged that three of the defendants prepared fraudulent applications for labor certification on behalf of Indonesian aliens seeking to remain in the United States despite not having any legitimate basis to do so. These applications claimed that the defendants intended to hire the aliens for jobs no United States citizens were willing or qualified to take. Had the applications been approved, the aliens in question would have been issued a so-called "Green Card" and allowed to work and remain in the United States legally. The investigation, however, found that much of the information in the applications was false, including the existence of the job, the qualifications of the alien and the alien's intended United States address.

The task force that conducted the investigation is comprised of ICE, the Fairfax County Police Department, the State Department's Diplomatic Security Service, the Department of Labor, the IRS, the Social Security Administration, the Virginia DMV, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Department of Homeland Security's Secret Service, and the FBI.

Investigative support was provided by the DHS U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Refugee, Asylum and International Operations; the Department of Justice Executive Office of Immigration Review, the Virginia Employment Commission, and the Department of Labor's Employment Training Commission.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys John Morton, Michael Rich, Rebeca Bellows, and David Laufman along with Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Beth Gibson.

The defendants named in the indictment and the specific charges lodged against them included:

Hans Gouw, 53, of Fairfax, Va., (asylum fraud)

Isnayanti Gouw, 35, of Fairfax (asylum fraud)

Jenny Gandasaputra, 51, of Fairfax (asylum fraud)

Herman Tanudjaja, 59, of Fairfax (conspiracy to commit identification document fraud)

Johnson Aliffin, 33, of Springfield, Va. (conspiracy to commit asylum fraud)

Ratna Hartanto, 38, of Alexandria (asylum fraud)

Rosita Setyawati, 46, of Philadelphia (asylum fraud)

Brigitta Parera, 35, of Vienna, Va. (asylum fraud)

Willy Irsan, 33, of Centreville, Va. (asylum fraud)

Achnita Supomo, 37, of Centreville (asylum fraud)

Lestari Nugroho, 27, of Portland, Ore. (asylum fraud)

Raymond Marschall, 26, of Fairfax (conspiracy to commit identification document fraud)

Hanny Kembuan, 46, of Glendale, Calif. (asylum fraud)

Herlina Suherman, 28, of East Lansing, Mich. (asylum fraud)

Surya Halim 33, of Centreville (asylum fraud)

Danny Susanto, 34, of Fairfax (conspiracy to commit asylum fraud)

Henry Lee, 29, address unknown (conspiracy to commit asylum fraud)

Albert Warong, 75, of Gaithersburg, Md. (conspiracy to commit identification document fraud)

Sari Tanudjaya, 48, of Gaithersburg (conspiracy to commit identification document fraud)

Johannis Ticoalu, 57, Alexandria (conspiracy to commit identification document fraud)

Megawaty Gandasaputra, 46, of Fairfax (asylum fraud)

Michael Wright, 43, of Fairfax (conspiracy to commit labor certification fraud)

Irawan Muljadi, 55, address unknown (conspiracy to commit identification document fraud)

Nany Kumala, 49, of Burke, Va. (identification document fraud)

Silvy Karageorge, 47, of Manassas, Va. (asylum fraud) and

Joandi Gani, 19, of Fairfax (labor certification fraud).

Twenty-three of the defendants are citizens of Indonesia, two are United States citizens, and one is believed to be a citizen of Australia of Indonesian descent. The 23 Indonesian citizens have the following U.S. immigration status: three are Lawful Permanent Residents, 15 have been granted asylum, and five have no legal status.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.